

March 2003

# Monograph

## Special Report



AMERICANS  
*for the* ARTS

*Serving Communities. Enriching Lives.*

Small and rural communities across the country continue to face drastic population shifts and economic upheaval. Many efforts are under way in these areas to create and implement economic revitalization and community development strategies. In analyzing resources, strengths, and needs, communities are increasingly seeing the potential of their existing creative economies—sectors of the economy that include arts, cultural and heritage organizations, businesses, and workers—as strong revenue, employment, and quality of life generators, or “creative industries.”

### Building Creative Economies: The Arts, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Development



*“I come from a tiny community of seven people. My parents were musicians, grandpa played banjo and old time music. I couldn’t afford a nice guitar so I made one. I built one guitar with my mother’s dresser drawer bottom. I met Albert Hash, a wonderful fiddle maker, who generously shared what he knew.”*

—Wayne Henderson, musician, guitar maker, and National Heritage Fellow, Mouth of Wilson, Virginia



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE ARTS



ARC  
APPALACHIAN  
REGIONAL  
COMMISSION

*Kenan Institute for the Arts at the  
North Carolina School of the Arts*

*“It is great to have so many people gathered in my district to discuss rural economic development and the arts. Western North Carolina has numerous examples of how the arts play an important role in boosting local economies, from the Brevard Music Center to the Flat Rock Playhouse to the mountain arts, crafts, and music. The arts attract new business, make Western North Carolina a tourist destination and help to preserve our culture.”*

—Representative Charles H. Taylor, North Carolina

Appalachia is a large, mountainous region, defined by the Appalachian Regional Commission as a 200,000 square mile region that follows the spine of the Appalachian Mountains from southern New York to northern Mississippi. It includes all of West Virginia and parts of 12 other states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Approximately a quarter of Appalachia’s 407 counties are economically distressed with local economies operating well below national norms.



Eileen B. Mason

*“I supported the creation of an arts center in my hometown of Hickory. Arts have a far bigger impact than just their beauty—the arts have helped diversify this state’s economy.”*

—Representative Cass Ballenger, North Carolina

*“Asheville, North Carolina, is a wonderful example of how productive creative workers can bolster local economies and enrich community life.”*

—Eileen B. Mason, senior deputy chairman,  
National Endowment for the Arts

*“From the largest to the smallest communities, the research clearly demonstrates that the arts attract audiences, spur business development, create local jobs, and generate government revenue. When we say that the arts mean business—that’s not just a slogan—it’s the truth”*

—Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO,  
Americans for the Arts



## Introduction

To explore the potential for creative economies in Appalachia, more than 300 individual artists and representatives from arts, humanities, historical, and heritage organizations; state and local arts agencies; federal, state, and local economic development and tourism agencies; and foundations gathered in Asheville, North Carolina in April 2002 to attend *Building Creative Economies: The Arts, Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Development in Appalachia*. Participants shared information about the successful use of arts and heritage in revitalizing Appalachian communities, as well as local, state, and national funding sources. The participants also discussed marketing, cultural heritage tourism, downtown revitalization, heritage areas, and artists as entrepreneurs. The conference was intended to increase the recognition of the arts as a factor in economic development, encourage more entrepreneurial activities by artists and arts organizations, and increase their access to economic development funding. Additionally, the conference was designed to spur the development of state action plans and increase collaboration among artists, arts organizations, economic/community development specialists, and funders.

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the federal co-sponsors of the conference, saw it as an opportunity to help community leaders in Appalachia who seek to develop local economies through the arts. Jesse L. White, federal co-chairman of the ARC, stated that the ARC is “searching for new strategies and options to help empower our people to create more sustainable economic futures for themselves. With the National Endowment for the Arts, we are planning to develop a synergistic strategy to build on natural advantages of the region and marry this with

entrepreneurship to build sustainable economic development.” He explained that the ARC’s economic development strategy has shifted from economic development through *jobs recruiting* to *jobs building* from local resources.

This monograph provides an overview of the conference proceedings and the economic impact of the arts and culture, recommended steps for developing a local creative economy, issues that should be taken into consideration, case studies of successful community development strategies utilizing available creative resources, and follow-up activities including state action planning and other initiatives.

“Since September 11th, we’ve seen how important the arts are to us as individuals, and as communities. We Americans are reconnecting with our roots, reflecting on our history, and expressing ourselves—in both sorrow and celebration—through painting, music, song, poetry, dance, and crafts. Home and hearth are back in style. And that’s good for the arts and good for local communities.”

—Eileen B. Mason, senior deputy chairman,  
National Endowment for the Arts



Jesse L. White and Eileen B. Mason

**“We are proud of the arts in North Carolina. Tourism is a \$12.5 billion a year business, \$4 billion of that is from cultural tourism and \$580 million is crafts.”**

—Secretary Libba Evans, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

## The Impact of Arts and Culture on Economies

The arts have long been part of the economic exchange in communities and regional economies. Until recently, the importance of the creative sector has been difficult to measure. However, evidence continues to grow that the arts are a significant sector of the American economy.

The Craft Organization Directors Association 2001 survey, *The Impact of Craft on the National Economy*, found that direct impact from sales of American handmade crafts totals \$14 billion. The survey also reported that:

- 106,000 to 126,000 craftspeople work in the U.S.
- Average gross sales/revenue per craftsperson is \$76,025
- Total impact of craft sales is \$12.3 to \$13.8 billion per year, one-third the volume of shoes purchased in the U.S. and four times the value of taxicab rides
- Median household income of craftspeople is \$50,000 per year, 26 percent above the national median of \$39,657
- Craft activity income comprises 47 percent of household income on average
- 22 percent of craft households derive all of their income from craft.

In another region of the country, the New England Council released *The Creative Economy Initiative: The Role of the Arts and Culture in New England's Economic Competitiveness* in June 2000. The report showed that the creative economy there provides jobs for 245,000 people or 3.5 percent of the New England workforce; generates more than \$4.4 billion in payroll alone; and surpasses both the employment and job growth rates of other leading industries.

On the national level, Americans for the Arts' 2002 study, *Arts & Economic Prosperity: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts Organizations and Their Audiences*, revealed that America's nonprofit arts industry generates \$134 billion in economic activity every year, including \$24.4 billion in federal, state, and local tax revenues, and supports 4.85 million full-time equivalent jobs.

The research and findings in these reports document the size and vigor of the arts and culture sector, provide new ways of looking at its contribution to economies, motivate other jurisdictions to examine the role of arts and culture in their own communities, and help make the case to public and private investors that stimulating creative employment is sound public policy.

**“We began by doing a regional economic impact study and documented that, in 1995, the craft community contributed \$122 million to our region—four times that of burley tobacco, our major agricultural crop. We learned 62 percent of objects are bought by visitors. Our first work was then cultural tourism. This market has been here. We didn't have to build the market. Our tourist attractions are based here, owned here.”**

—Becky Anderson, executive director,  
HandMade in America, Asheville, North Carolina

## Developing a Local Creative Economy

**A** proven way to strengthen communities and their economies is to identify their cultural assets and stimulate local creative businesses and nonprofit organizations to build a strong local creative economy. Throughout the *Building Creative Economies* conference, participants shared strategies to build indigenous economic activity through local arts and heritage business development and learned about local initiatives and national partnerships that are creating jobs and restoring life to rural communities and small towns, such as West Virginia's Tamarack crafts center and a new \$7.5 million Artisans Gateway Center near Berea, Kentucky.

Recommendations that emerged from the conference concerning the development of creative economies and creative entrepreneurship include:

1. Identify and conserve cultural traditions through folk and traditional arts fieldwork.
2. Conduct asset-based community planning.
3. Engage artists in planning.
4. Build coalitions.
5. Plan appropriate scale to fit rural lifestyles.
6. Provide technical assistance.
7. Market effectively.
8. Build local leadership and community capacity.
9. Integrate the arts into community economic development plans.
10. Assemble funding.
11. Create arts-based business incubators.
12. Stimulate cultural heritage tourism.

## Building on the Advantages of Appalachia

"One of the Appalachian Regional Commission's ten objectives has been to capitalize on tourism, heritage, and the arts to stimulate economic development.... Flannery O'Connor wrote 'in the South, beauty is our money crop.' When you think of art, crafts, people, and music as a crop in this wonderfully rich soil of Appalachia, it is something that can be harvested.... The soil from which the beauty comes must be sustained and nurtured. We have a natural advantage in Appalachia, we can produce economic development out of this and can protect this rich culture that means so much to all of us...."

—Jesse L. White, federal co-chairman,  
Appalachian Regional Commission

"Increasing entrepreneurship in Rural America is an essential strategy for increasing economic performance and prosperity. An entrepreneurship strategy focuses on entrepreneurs, not just businesses; creates a support infrastructure for these entrepreneurs; and creates communities that recognize, value, and support entrepreneurs."

—Chuck Fluharty, director,  
Rural Policy Research Institute





On dais from left: Sheila Kay Adams, Chuck Fluharty, Tog Newman, Patrick Overton.

**“Culture and place, whether connected more by fact or by fancy in Appalachia, have historically played a significant role in local and regional commerce. For nearly two centuries there has been tourism in the Appalachian region....Music, crafts, storytelling, and foodways associated with the region have been presented to both internal and external markets for at least as long.”**

—Barry Bergey, director, Folk and Traditional Arts, National Endowment for the Arts.

## 1. Identify and conserve cultural traditions through fieldwork.

Kathleen Mundell, who pioneered the process of Discovery Research in Maine, outlined how folklorists can conduct basic research to identify local cultural assets: “Field work is done before a heritage program kicks in. Communities...have a mass of resources in people, history, artifacts, places, and skills. Fieldwork identifies and documents these local traditions. This is an

occasion for active listening in a community. A person tied to a place says what is significant about living and working in that place. Heritage programs grow out of such conversations. Results are place-based, local programs that highlight local artists and traditions. Effective field work increases the local capacity to carry on such work.”

## 2. Conduct asset-based community planning.

The consistent advice to local organizers is to start by understanding a community’s assets. Successful creative economies are built upon community strengths. Too often, planning dwells on what is wrong with an area, and leaves community members thinking the solution to their problems must come from outside. Plans position communities to successfully seek funding to implement their economic development initiatives.

## 3. Engage artists in planning.

Artists, craftspeople, and musicians are not only sources of creativity; they are valuable community members who can contribute to planning and community building. Artists and other creative workers have much to offer their communities through their ability to apply creative solutions to community problems. They should be drawn into community planning early, not after the plans call for putting artists into studios.

## 4. Build coalitions.

Success depends upon effective community coalitions. The job of cultural economic development requires many types of expertise and resources—no individual or agency can do it alone. Partnerships seem to be part of every successful creative economy initiative.

*“Ten years ago, young people were leaving Chesnee, South Carolina. They couldn’t persuade a doctor to live there. There was no reason for tourists to stop. Folks cleaned up an area by the tracks and created a park with public art. Coalitions formed and started another project, a foothills artisans center. The center and its artists advertised on the highways and brought people to town. This encouraged local business owners to do facelifts on storefronts. And they got their doctor.”*

—Joyce Cauthen, executive director,  
Alabama Folklife Association

## 5. Plan appropriate scale to fit rural lifestyles.

Activists have stressed the importance of building economic development projects on a scale appropriate to the way local communities actually work. Kathleen Mundell states that a site which attracts too many tourists is changed by crowds and “...is no longer what it was, it becomes something else.” “What we do should remain a good fit for all,” she recommends. “Some folk artists don’t want to be visible. Development should be in scale with community needs even if this doesn’t seem ambitious enough.”

## 6. Provide technical assistance.

Often outside expertise is needed. Specialists in ethnographic research, community assessment, planning, architecture, design, and funding may be needed. Community leaders repeatedly stress the need for outside experts to respect local ownership and control of initiatives.

## 7. Market effectively.

If the creative enterprises are aimed at tourists, the projects must be well marketed. Experienced cultural planners say: know yourself, know your product, know your audience, and know your marketing tools. “Cultural heritage travelers are an extremely attractive target market because they tend to stay longer and spend more money,” remarked Amy Webb, Heritage Tourism program director for the National Trust for Historic Preservation. “But today’s cultural heritage travelers also have higher expectations, and it is critical to provide high quality, value-added experiences—and to promote those experiences accordingly.”

*“Our community had lost hope....We thought the magic would be a prison or manufacturing plant. But then we started to consider our own assets as we started to plan. We had heritage. We decided we’d do it ourselves, even if we weren’t selected for grants. This would be a 10- to 20-year process. We went through visioning and formed an educational committee. It was locally driven, but we brought in outsiders to help. We wanted a technical assistance team that included landscape architecture, heritage preservation, and planning expertise to help us flesh out our plan. We used the resources of our community college too. Experts helped give credence to what we were doing, especially for people outside the county. We received \$20 million in funding for projects. We formed a fantastic board. As a result, we developed our civic capacity. Our community has a plan, we have hope, we have more pride and we have more dreams.”*

—Ron Daley, campus director, Hazard Community  
College, Hindman, Kentucky

**“Our Kentucky Appalachian Artisan Center on Main Street helps market products and provide services to the artisans no matter what their skills. We started with business assistance before marketing, so they would be prepared. We worked with a \$1.6 million budget plus a planning grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission.”**

—Ron Daley, Hazard Community College

## 8. Build local leadership and community capacity.

It is common for studies of successful businesses, nonprofits, or community development strategies to acknowledge the critical role of successful leadership. The same is true for building creative economies. What is not so obvious is that local economies built upon creative enterprises also work to inspire new leadership. The difference is enterprising small businesses compared with dutiful factory workers. The enthusiasm generates civic pride and local political engagement.

## 9. Integrate into community economic development plans.

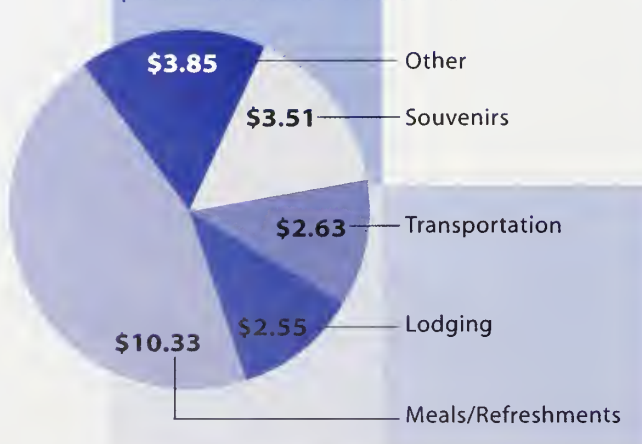
Cultural economic development does not succeed in isolation. An arts program is not a magic bullet that can single-handedly restore a community to economic health. To hold this as a promise is to set up an impossible expectation. Creative economies succeed when they are part of broader community initiatives. An arts business incubator near Asheville is part of an environmental and energy conservation plan. Other projects partner with transportation, agriculture, parks and recreation, forestry, historic preservation, literacy, youth development, and education agencies.

It is common for creative economic initiatives to be embedded into broadly-conceived community planning. The community planning then positions the initiatives for funding from sectors that would otherwise ignore cultural development.

## Arts & Economic Prosperity:

### The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts Organizations and Their Audiences

**Nonprofit Arts Attendees Spend an Average of \$22.87 Above the Cost of Admission**



**A**merica's nonprofit arts industry generates \$134 billion in economic activity every year—\$53.2 billion in spending by arts organizations and an additional \$80.8 billion in event-related spending by arts audiences. This economic activity has a significant impact on the nation's economy, supporting 4.9 million full-time jobs and generating \$24.4 billion in government revenue. The arts, unlike most industries, leverage significant amounts of event-related spending by their audiences. Attendance at arts events generates related commerce for hotels, restaurants, parking garages, and more. Data collected from 40,000 attendees at a range of arts events reveal an



## 10. Assemble funding.

Creative economic initiatives require funding from multiple sources. Arts leaders have learned to look outside the arts for financial support from other sectors including job creation, historic preservation, downtown revitalization, economic development, travel and tourism, environment, and agriculture sources. These traditionally non-arts funders respond most generously when an initiative is an integral part of a larger community effort. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, for example, supports “essential community facilities” and has supported cultural centers, but only when they have been identified as priorities within a broader community plan.

## 11. Create business incubators.

The business incubators that have worked in urban communities to nurture new businesses are also viable in smaller, rural towns. These typically include subsidized facilities, central administrative services, onsite technical assistance or training in product development, business planning, and

marketing. Small business loans or peer lending groups may be part of an incubator program.

For example, in partnership with the Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development Council, EnergyXchange, and Mayland Community College, HandMade in America established glass and ceramic craft business incubator studios powered by methane gas at the abandoned Yancey-Mitchell County (North Carolina) landfill near the Penland School of Crafts.

## 12. Stimulate cultural heritage tourism.

Cultural heritage tourism is big business and many creative economy success stories rely in part on attracting visitors and their money. The same type of creative entrepreneurship that preserves local heritage, strengthens local community pride of place, and provides local economic opportunity also attracts visitors. This area has been the focus of the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Heritage Tourism Program and the Share Your Heritage Workshops developed with National Endowment for the Arts funding.

average spending of \$22.87 per person, not including the price of admission.

The findings also reveal that non-local attendees spend nearly twice as much as local attendees (\$38.05 compared to \$21.75), demonstrating that a community that attracts cultural tourists stands to harness significant economic rewards.

## Local Economic Impact

In Asheville, North Carolina, the nonprofit arts organizations reported spending a total of \$14,669,669 in fiscal 2000, with an additional \$46,313,975 of spending by their audiences.

This \$60,983,644 of economic activity supported 2,100 full-time jobs and generated \$1,692,000 in local government revenue and \$3,868,000 in state government revenue. The average spending by the 1.6 million attendees was \$28.18 per person, per event, in addition to the cost of admission. Local attendees (those who reside within the County) spent an average of \$22.99 per person, while their non-local counterparts spent an average of \$51.05 per person.

Source: Americans for the Arts

### 13. Build on local strengths.

One principle often repeated is to take advantage of local strengths and indigenous resources. Many communities in the United States struggle to find employment and preserve their quality of life. For many, the local industrial economy is gone and the new information technology economy has failed to deliver jobs. While some cities and regions have been successful in attracting new outside industry, this industrial recruitment strategy has failed many communities. Rural towns find industrial recruitment especially frustrating. An alternative mode of economic development is to build upon local strengths that include a community's creativity, heritage, and culture. This strategy strengthens the arts in communities throughout the country while creating jobs and helping to restore community livability.

### 14. Provide ongoing training and education.

Training and education are important elements in successful creative economies programs. In some communities, an arts or crafts school or community college can provide arts skill training. Increasingly, entrepreneurial training is also being offered. Educational programs not only train creative workers for self-employment; some grow to be economic forces of their own. The long-trusted method of master artists teaching apprentices still works to build arts techniques and successful careers. Many economic development strategies include apprenticeships in their educational programs.

## Issues to Be Considered

**B**uilding Creative Economies conference participants also raised several issues that should be considered when trying to create sustainable rural cultural entrepreneurship:

**Respect rural people and ways.** Successful creative economic development initiatives come from within or involve productive, respectful collaborations between local community members and outside organizers. Appalachian community leaders made it clear that planners must meet this condition. "Community participation in all stages of planning," said Patricia Wells of Heritage Partnerships in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, "is critical, and any development efforts must focus on nurturing what is already present in these communities—sense of place, distinctive regional traditional culture, and local history."

**Cultural stereotypes are barriers to cultural economic development.** Sustainable community development also requires that community members respect themselves, each other, and their communities. Fortunately, creative economic development builds community self-respect.

*"Ruralism is a stereotype from the outside. The real issue is not how outsiders view us but how we view ourselves. Our greatest limitations are those we impose on ourselves. Some of the most profoundly creative, brilliantly insightful art I've seen is from communities of less than 2,500 people. It's access to excellence. When you have the one you will produce the other."*

—Patrick Overton, author, *Rebuilding the Front Porch of America: Essays on the Art of Community Making.*

**Student, avocational, and noncommercial artists are important.**

It is clear that not all artists want to be publicly recognized, to market their work, or be accessible. Not all communities want tourists. It is still important to nurture creativity, to protect and pass on traditions, and to preserve community heritage whether or not there is a direct benefit to the economy. Just as industry needs basic research and development, and professional sports need recreational sports, a creative economy requires a base of creative people, authentic places, and communities that appreciate arts and culture.

**Authenticity and quality matter.** Community cultural development requires artistic quality and authenticity: mediocre art does not inspire community development and phony tourist attractions cannot sustain interest. Fortunately, most creative people who are at the heart of creative economies care about authenticity and quality. Joyce Cauthen, director of the Alabama Folklife Association, contrasted authentic cultural economic development (that retains residents with economic opportunity and attracts visitors) with “Anywhere USA” where “strip malls, big box retailers, and highway bypasses undermine many communities. The highway numbers may be unique, but nothing else is.”

**Do it for yourselves.** Economic development in rural America has more often been about businesses and institutions doing things for or to people. Creative economic development requires that people do for themselves; a creative economy cannot be imposed.



Bill Strickland Jr., founder and president, Manchester Craftsmen's Guild

## Case Studies

**C**reative economies are making a difference in Appalachian communities. Several case studies, taken from *Building Creative Economics: The Working Papers*, follow.

### Western Maryland

In this region of the Allegheny Mountains, Amish and German farmwomen and retired textile workers are upholding the area's longstanding tradition of weaving rag rugs and, in the process, have created two models of selling and marketing work. In addition to selling their work wholesale to retail stores in the region, some enterprising weavers set up stores in their homes and sell directly to tourists. They add a small surcharge to the price of their rugs and quilts to pay for the time they spend talking about their work to visitors, something of a “cultural tourism” surcharge. This entrepreneurial model allows the traditional crafts person to market directly to the consumer and to retain the control otherwise relinquished to middlemen. Secondly, the Penn Alps and the Spruce Forest Artisan Village provide marketing and work centers for local artisans exploring a range of media including bird carving, basket making, handloom weaving, and pottery. The center also offers classes and is a big draw for tourists traveling west.



## The Southern Tier Region, New York

The Roberson Center for the Arts and Sciences in Binghamton has a long established and successful folklife program that highlights the region's indigenous arts—from fly tying and woodcarving to Ukrainian willow basketry—through exhibitions and school programs. Through a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts, the Schoharie Arts Council hired folklorists Janis Benincasa and Ellen McHale to identify traditional artists and art forms. After identifying local musicians, Benincasa applied to the NEA's Folk Arts Program for support to develop programming that showcased the region's Irish musical traditions. The resulting festival, a big success, eventually moved to East Durham and spawned a variety of annual programs including the Catskills Irish Arts Week and the Traditional Music Festival. These events now bring thousands of visitors back to the Southern Tier and the Catskill region.

## North Carolina

Under the leadership of HandMade in America, a group of western North Carolinians, struggling to find fresh approaches to economic development and renewal, realized that the answer could potentially be found in the invisible industry of craftspeople already working throughout the Blue Ridge Mountains. Over 360 citizens participated in a regional planning process to help determine how HandMade could establish Western North Carolina as a major leader for handmade objects. Their strategies focus on providing business and financial support for craftspeople, nurturing the region's craft culture through public relations and education, and maintaining rural quality of life. In addition to their publication and distribution of *Craft Trails of North Carolina*, current projects include: small town revitalization; craft business incubator studios powered by methane gas from an abandoned landfill; and development of garden and countryside trails through North Carolina along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

## Ohio

Through traditional music preservation, storytelling, oral history, community festivals, and a community murals program, Rural Action works to revitalize Appalachian Ohio. Its vision is to create strategies for the region that involve people of diverse backgrounds in building environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Serving as a “public entrepreneur,” Rural Action initiated the Mural Corridor program, encouraging communities to create public murals in their downtown areas. An artist helps oversee production of each mural and community members donate time, skills, and money, backed by matching funds from the Ohio Arts Council. The Mural Corridor runs through 14 towns. Bus tours regularly come down from Toledo, infusing money into poor communities and, perhaps more importantly, generating community pride and reigniting a sense of place in towns struggling for survival.

**Glouster, Ohio, a former coal-mining town, recently completed a 60-foot mural through a process that took over a year and involved numerous public meetings, historical research, and interviews with retired coal miners.**

## Pennsylvania

Focusing on the heritage of iron, steel, and related industries, the Rivers of Steel Heritage Area is a multifaceted program that conserves and manages the cultural, natural, and historic resources of southwestern Pennsylvania. Coordinated by the Steel Industry Corporation, it plays a key role in Southwestern Pennsylvania's economic development strategy through encouragement of tourism and other economic development based on the region's steel-related industrial and cultural traditions.

## West Virginia

The Augusta Heritage Center of Davis & Elkins College in Elkins, West Virginia, is dedicated to making traditional music, crafts, dancing, and folklore available to visitors and residents alike. Over 200 weeklong intensive classes are taught in traditional crafts, dance, folklore, and music, augmented with storytelling performances, films, panel discussions, and craft demonstrations. Community workshops offer educational opportunities for area residents and public presentations provide additional cultural experiences. About 20 concerts, 12 public dances, and two festivals are produced each year, as well as performances and educational programs for public schools, senior centers, and community organizations; weekly jam sessions sponsored in partnership with Elkins Parks and Recreation; and apprenticeship programs, field research, and documentation of Appalachian folk artists and traditional folk culture.

In 1996, 11 counties in southern West Virginia were designated by the U.S. Congress as the National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA). Under the jurisdiction and protection of the National Park Service, the National Coal Heritage Area was created “to preserve, protect, and interpret lands, structures, and communities with unique and significant historic and cultural value associated with the coal mining heritage of West Virginia.” Presently, the NCHA is in a “Start Up” phase and has received three federal appropriations of \$250,000 each through the National Park Service. With these funds, the NCHA is preparing a management plan that will be reviewed by the Secretary of the Interior. Once the plan has been approved and projects have been identified for funding, up to \$1 million per year could be appropriated by Congress for a total of \$10 million.

In cooperation with the National Park Service, the National Council for the Traditional Arts and the Blue Ridge Parkway have been producing a three-concert summer series to promote public



World Bank Institute breakout: Jerri Dell, Paula Duggan, and others

awareness of the planned Blue Ridge Music Center, to be situated just north of the Virginia/North Carolina state line. Visitors to the Center will be able to hear and learn about the many different types of Blue Ridge music, and to meet people and performers living in the area today. Planned programs and activities include films, exhibits, a listening library, publications, recordings and other media, as well as venues for both local and legendary performance.

## Southern Highland Craft Guild

The Southern Highland Craft Guild is a nonprofit educational organization comprising some 700 craftspeople living and working in the mountainous regions of nine Southern states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. One of the strongest craft organizations in the country, the Guild works to instill and maintain standards of excellence in the design and workmanship of crafts taught, produced, and marketed in the southern Appalachian region and has partnered with the National Park Service for over 50 years. It operates the Blue Ridge Parkway's Folk Art Center, the most popular attraction on the Blue Ridge Parkway, welcoming 300,000 visitors each year.



## Follow-Up Activities: State Action Planning and Other Initiatives

**T**he *Building Creative Economies* conference featured an opportunity for participants from each state to develop a state action plan.

Following a process developed by the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, participants identified the best practices and lessons they had learned from the conference; developed a consensus on key partners and audiences; and determined the steps they would take to address interagency cooperation, entrepreneurship, and other issues identified during their discussions.

Since the *Building Creative Economies* conference, several state arts agencies in the 13 ARC states have held planning meetings “back home.” Kentucky will refocus their statewide cultural heritage master plan and pursue the possibility of a series of regional forums throughout the state, followed by a statewide conference modeled on *Building Creative Economies*. Virginia has also held its own planning session and hopes to establish a Virginia Creative Economies Initiative focused on Southwest Virginia.

According to V.A. Patterson, director of the Craftsmen’s Guild of Mississippi, representatives from Mississippi who first met at the conference

later began planning a cultural tour of arts organizations, historic sites, and artist studios in the Appalachian region of Mississippi. For the first time, arts groups are working with numerous convention and visitors bureaus, the Mississippi Development Authority, Department of Tourism, and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

The two federal partners have also undertaken follow-up activities. The Appalachian Regional Commission has awarded \$200,000 in grants for arts-based e-commerce projects, several of which came out of conference discussions. The National Endowment for the Arts has arranged for the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Heritage Tourism Program to offer Share Your Heritage cultural heritage tourism development workshops in the ARC service area. Both agencies remain committed to developing additional follow-up activities such as business training for artists.

## Resources

**Americans for the Arts.** To find the local arts agency in your community and information about the economic impact of the arts, visit [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).

**Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).** The ARC offers information and guidelines on funding to states and counties in Appalachia for self-sustaining economic development and an improved quality of life. Visit [www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov).

**National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).** The NEA invites applications addressing issues raised at the conference. Of particular relevance may be two categories under Grants for Arts Projects: Artistic Creativity and Preservation (especially Heritage and Preservation) and Challenge America: Access to the Arts. Visit [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov).

The NEA also provides specific examples of arts projects funded by other federal agencies. The *Cultural Funding: Federal Opportunities* database can be searched either by federal agency or by program type. Visit [www.arts.gov/federal.html](http://www.arts.gov/federal.html).



Virginia state breakout session, Frank Hodsoll and others.





**National Endowment for the Arts/U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).** The NEA and the USDA Forest Service offer the Arts and Rural Community Assistance Initiative in a limited number of states each year. In fiscal 2003, the following four states in the ARC service area are eligible: Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Visit [www.arts.gov/partner/Rural.html](http://www.arts.gov/partner/Rural.html).

**National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA).** NASAA offers information on state arts agency funding and arts success stories. Visit [www.nasaa-arts.org](http://www.nasaa-arts.org).

**National Trust for Historic Preservation.** The National Trust, through its Heritage Tourism Program, offers cultural heritage tourism development (*Share Your Heritage*) workshops. Visit [www.nthp.org/heritage\\_tourism/index.html](http://www.nthp.org/heritage_tourism/index.html) and [www.ruralheritage.org/heritagetourism](http://www.ruralheritage.org/heritagetourism).

**U.S. Department of Agriculture.** The National Agricultural Library Rural Information Center offers online publications and funding resources addressing rural issues. Visit [www.nal.usda.gov/ric](http://www.nal.usda.gov/ric).

Rural Business Enterprise Grants support development of small and emerging private business enterprises located in rural areas. Visit [www.rur-dev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbeg.htm](http://www.rur-dev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbeg.htm).

**The Creative Economy Initiative** is a partnership of New England's business, government, cultural and educational leaders committed to strengthening the region's economic vitality by fostering its creative economy. Visit [www.creativeeconomy.org](http://www.creativeeconomy.org).

**The Foundation Center.** The Foundation Center offers directories of private foundations. Visit [www.fdncenter.org](http://www.fdncenter.org).

**Partners in Tourism: Culture and Commerce.** The NEA, Americans for the Arts, NASAA, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation are members of Partners in Tourism: Culture and Commerce, a coalition of cultural service organizations, the travel industry, and federal agencies that provides a forum for collaborative research, education, promotion, and advocacy with the common goal of advancing the role of culture and heritage in the travel and tourism industry. NASAA maintains cultural tourism updates on its website at [www.nasaa-arts.org/artworks/ct\\_contents.shtml](http://www.nasaa-arts.org/artworks/ct_contents.shtml).

## Publications

### Americans for the Arts

Visit [www.AmericansForTheArts.org](http://www.AmericansForTheArts.org).

*Arts & Economic Prosperity: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts Organizations and Their Audiences*

### National Trust for Historic Preservation

Visit [www.preservationbooks.org](http://www.preservationbooks.org).

*Getting Started: How to Succeed in Heritage Tourism*

*Share Your Heritage: Cultural Heritage Tourism Success Stories*

*Stories Across America: Opportunities in Rural Tourism*

*Touring Historic Places*

*Welcoming Visitors to Your Community: Training Tour Guides and Other Hospitality Ambassadors*

### New England Council

Visit [www.creativeeconomy.com](http://www.creativeeconomy.com).

*The Creative Economy Initiative: The Role of the Arts and Culture in New England's Economic Competitiveness*

### Craft Organization Directors Association

Visit [www.handmadeinamerica.org/economic/CODA.htm](http://www.handmadeinamerica.org/economic/CODA.htm).

*The Impact of Craft on the National Economy*

# Building Creative Economies

The Arts, Entrepreneurship,  
and Sustainable Development  
In Appalachia

**Asheville, North Carolina  
April 28-30, 2002**

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